

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

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INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 EB-11 COME-00 AID-20 OMB-01

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 5965

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (FAHMY, ISMAIL)

SUBJECT: FAHMY VISIT: US/GOE TALKS ON JOINT COMMISSION

SUMMARY: GOE DELEGATION MAY BE EXPECTED TO FOCUS ON PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT AREAS DURING WASHINGTON VISIT. THEY WILL BE LARGELY PROJECT-ORIENTED. THEY LIKELY WILL NOT PAY ATTENTION TO PRIORITIES. DESPITE SEVERAL MEETINGS AMONG THEMSELVES THEY WILL NOT HAVE DISCUSSED MATTERS RELATED TO THE ORGANIZATION OF JOINT WORKING GROUPS AS SUCH.

1. HAVE BEEN ENDEAVORING TO OBTAIN SOME GENERAL READING AS TO GOE PLANNING AND EXPECTATIONS REGARDING THE FAHMY VISIT AND REALIZE THE PROBLEM A 20-25 MAN DELEGATION CAN CAUSE IN TERMS OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETINGS ON THE WASHINGTON END. WHILE THE EGYPTIANS HAVE HAD SEVERAL MEETINGS AMONG THEMSELVES HERE AT THE MINISTERIAL AND DIRECTOR LEVEL, OSTENSIBLY TO ORGANIZE THEIR OWN THINKING ON THE SUBJECT OF US ASSISTANCE, WE HAVE SEEN FEW MANIFESTATIONS OTHER THAN A NUMBER OF PROJECT ASSISTANCE REQUESTS. THERE HAS BEEN NO REAL DISCUSSION TO DATE OF THE ORGANIZATION TO IMPLEMENT THE JOINT COMMISSION AS ENVISAGED IN THE JUNE 14

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COMMUNIQUE; I.E., NO DISCUSSIONS FROM THE EGYPTIAN

SIDE ABOUT WORDING GROUPS OR THEIR POSSIBLE COMPOSITION.

2. AT THIS JUNCTURE, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT FAHMY AND THE DELEGATION HAVE SEVERAL THINGS IN MIND. FIRST OF ALL, FAHMY WILL WANT TO SOUND US OUT ON THE NEXT STEPS IN THE PROCESS TOWARD A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT. SECONDLY, HE WILL WANT TO OBTAIN A READING FOR SADAT ON THE PROBLEMS CONFRONTING PRESIDENT NIXON AND WHAT THIS PORTENDS FOR THE FUTURE OF US-SOVIET RELATIONS. THIRDLY, THE GROUP WILL BE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO TAKE HOME WITH THEM IN TERMS OF SUBSTANTIAL US ASSISTANCE. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, FAHMY HAS ALREADY STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF SOME CONCRETE ASSISTANCE COMING OUT OF HIS TRIP.

3. WITH REGARD TO THE LATTER, THE ENTIRE APPROACH TO DATE HAS BEEN PROJECT ORIENTED. WE HAVE ALREADY SENT THE DEPARTMENT A LIST OF SIX PROJECTS WE RECEIVED FROM DELEGATION MEMBER RAFIQ SUWAILAM. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THERE ARE THREE OTHER LISTS IN PREPARATION, WHICH WE EXPECT TO RECEIVE TODAY.

4. THE COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATION IS SUCH AS TO INDICATE THAT THERE HAS NOT BEEN MUCH THOUGHT GIVEN TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE VARIOUS WORKING GROUPS OF THE JOINT COMMISSION. MOST OF THE DELEGATION, WERE THEY TO BE CATEGORIZED ALONG WORKING GROUP LINES, WOULD FALL UNDER THE JWG ON DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT, AS ENVISAGED IN THE PAPER DRAFTED BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY PARSKY. EVEN AL-GABAILI OF THE ACADEMY OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IS AN ATOMIC ENERGY SPECIALIST. IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE THEREFORE TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK WHILE IN WASHINGTON FOR A WORKING GROUP IN THIS AREA, EVEN THOUGH THERE IS LESS LIKELIHOOD OF BEING ABLE TO FLESH OUT THE WORKING GROUPS IN THE HEALTH/MEDICINE, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH AND CULTURAL SECTORS UNTIL MEETINGS IN AIRO.

5. A MEETING AUGUST 7 WITH AHMED IFFAT, THE INDIVIDUAL DESIGNATED BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT TO COORDINATE US ASSISTANCE EFFORTS, HAS TENDED TO REINFORCE THE VIEW THAT THE DELEGATION WILL COME PROJECT ORIENTED AND, PERHAPS, CONFIDENTIAL

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LARGELY WITHOUT ANY PARTICULAR FOCUS ON PRIORITIES. ALTHOUGH IFFAT WAS DESIGNATED AS THE COORDINATOR SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, THIS HAS BEEN OUR FIRST MEETING WITH HIM. HE HAS NOT REALLY APPEARED ON THE SCENE ANYWHERE UNTIL NOW AND NO ONE SEEMED TO KNOW WHO HE WAS. DURING OUR DISCUSSIONS, HE APPEARED TACITURN AND A BIT SARDONIC AND OUR EXCHANGE NEVER REACHED ANY REAL DEPTH, OTHER THAN TO HAVE HIM POINT OUT TO US

THAT EGYPT WAS IN TREMENDOUS NEED OF INFUSIONS OF ASSISTANCE AND OUTSIDE CAPITAL, ALL OF WHICH HE TOOK FOR GRANTED AS READILY BEING DESERVED BY EGYPT. IT WAS NOT A PARTICULARLY PRODUCTIVE SESSION. WE CAME AWAY WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT PERHAPS HE HAD NOT EVEN READ THE JUNE 14 COMMUNIQUE AND, LIKE SO MANY OTHERS HERE IN EGYPT, HAD NOT REALLY FOCUSED ON EGYPT'S NEEDS IN TERMS OF PRIORITIES. NOR, DESPITE HIS EXPERIENCE IN THE UNITED STATES, DID HE SEEM TO KNOW VERY MUCH ABOUT THE REALITIES OF THE AMERICAN AID PROGRAM, TIED AS IT IS TO OUR CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESSES.

6. IN TERMS OF ARRANGEMENTS, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS ASSISTANCE WITH AN EMPHASIS LARGELY ON DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT. IN VIEW OF SECRETARY SIMON'S VISIT, AND THE GROUNDWORK WHICH WAS LAID AT THAT TIME, THEY MAY BE EXPECTED TO WANT TO MEET WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY PARISKY, AS SECRETARY SIMON'S DESIGNEE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT PROBLEMS, AND OF COURSE WITH APPROPRIATE AID OFFICIALS. APPROPRIATE COMMERCE APPOINTMENTS WILL ALSO BE USEFUL. DEPENDING UPON THE GROUP'S INTEREST IN DISCUSSING THE FUTURE ORGANIZATION OF WORKING GROUPS OR ACTIVITIES IN OTHER AREAS, IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE TO BRING THEM IN TOUCH WITH OFFICIALS IN HEW, NSF AND POSSIBLY THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES. GIVEN THE GENERAL LACK OF FAMILIARITY HERE WITH THE CONGRESSIONAL PROCESS, IT MIGHT BE PARTICULARLY USEFUL TO ARRANGE A MEETING WITH ONE OR MORE OF THE CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS WHO HAVE EVINCED AN INTEREST IN EGYPT AND MIDDLE EASTERN AFFAIRS.

7. WITH REGARD TO THE DELEGATION ITSELF, ALTHOUGH
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THERE ARE ONLY TWO MINISTERIAL LEVEL MEMBERS, THERE ARE SEVERAL HIGHLY COMPETENT INDIVIDUALS INCLUDED IN THE GROUP. SAAD KHALIL OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IS A HIGHLY CAPABLE AND EXPERIENCED OFFICIALS. HE IS PARTICULARLY KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND HAS BEEN QUITE OUTSPOKEN WITH SOME OF US ABOUT THE MANNER IN WHICH THE UNITED STATES HAS HANDLED ITS ACTIVITIES ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. MAHMOUD ALI HASSAN IS AN ABLE INDIVIDUAL, WHO CAN BE EXPECTED TO DISCUSS AID PROJECTS WITH SKILL. AHMED AL MAKAWI HEADED THE PURCHASING MISSION FOR PL-480 COMMODITIES FOR 12 YEARS FROM 1955-67. AHMED MUNTASAR THE SUEZ CANAL AUTHORITY'S FOLLOW-UP MAN, IS PRESSING HARD FOR EQUIPMENT ALREADY REQUESTED FROM US.

8. BELIEVE THE DELEGATION WILL PROBABLY EXPECT
ARRANGEMENTS ALONG THE LINES USUALLY CARRIED OUT HERE
IN CAIRO FOR VISITORS. THEY WILL EXPECT THAT THE
DELEGATION WILL BE PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY EITHER AS
AS WHOLE OR IN PART, TO CALL APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS
AT WHICH TIME THEY WILL STRESS PARTICULAR ASPETS
OF ASSISTANCE THEY CONSIDER GERMANE. WE WOULD HOPE IN
THIS REGARD, HOWEVER, THAT IT WOULD BE FEASIBLE
TO DIVIDE THE DELEGATION AND TAILOR THE SITUATION
AS MUCH AS WE CAN.

9. WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE THE DEPARTMENT WITH
WHATEVER OTHER INFORMATION WE ARE ABLE TO OBTAIN
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